

# **History**

**of the**

## **U.S. Food and Drug Administration**

**Interviewee:** Lois M. Meyer

**Interviewer:** Fred Lofsvold

**Date:** July 10, 1987

**Place:** Buffalo, NY

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
Public Health Service

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GENERAL TOPIC OF INTERVIEW: History of the Food and Drug Administration

DATE: July 10, 1987

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INTERVIEWER(S):

NAME: Lois M. Meyer

NAME: Fred Lofsvold

ADDRESS: Food and Drug Administration  
Buffalo District Office

ADDRESS: Food and Drug Administration  
Buffalo District Office

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## MEYER 1

FL: This is a recording in the series of oral history interviews of the Food and Drug Administration. We are interviewing today Lois M. Meyer, the consumer affairs officer, Buffalo District, at her office in Buffalo. The date is July 10, 1987. The interviewer is Fred Lofsvold.

Mrs. Meyer, to start this off, would you briefly state, for the record, your background—that is, your education and experience before you came to FDA—and then the jobs that you've held during your career with Food and Drug Administration.

LM: I am a graduate of Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York, as a home economist; so I have a bachelor of science in home economics. My major was foods and institution management, so my first position out of Pratt—and I graduated in 1950—was to be assistant house director of the Madiera School in Greenway, Virginia. In that position I had the responsibility for menu planning, food purchasing, general supervision of the kitchen staff, the dining hall staff, and working with the house director in the running of the physical plant of the school. I remained there for three years. During that period of time, Miss Lucy Madiera, who was the founder of the school, was still alive, and had great influence on the students and on the faculty, and I was considered part of the faculty of the school.

From Madiera, I spent a year as dining hall supervisor at Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut. After that year, I then joined the Connecticut Dairy and Food Council in Hartford, Connecticut as a nutrition consultant, and had a responsibility for conducting nutrition education programs throughout the state, although my general geographic responsibility was the city of Hartford

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and the counties to the north and east, since we had a resident office in New Haven and another one in Bridgeport. So I had no responsibility for program in the southern part of the state.

I was with the Dairy Council from 1954 to 1960, and at that time I moved my Dairy Council experience to Buffalo, New York, and became the executive director of the Niagara Frontier Dairy Council, and had a responsibility for the supervision of the program in a geographical area that included Erie County, Niagara County, and half of Orleans County.

During this period of time, from 1960 to 1964, I had an opportunity to meet Mrs. Mabel French, who was the part-time consumer consultant for the Buffalo District Office of FDA. Mrs. French was a very interesting person. She was a homemaker, but had been very active in the Erie County Cooperative Extension and had served in many leadership roles for the Cooperative Extension. She was also very active in the Buffalo Federation of Women's Clubs, and it's my understanding that part of her responsibility for FDA was to meet with groups, both professional groups and consumer groups, to tell them about FDA's programs and, indeed, she came and spoke to the Western District Home Economics Association. I was a member of that organization and still am.

During this presentation, Mrs. French had a series of slides that she used to tell about the agency and what the agency's responsibilities were, and she also told us about some of the issues that were before them at that particular time. The agency was trying to establish a standard for cola. As she explained it to us, there was some opposition to having a list of ingredients on the cola, and distributed to us a copy of the Federal Register document, and I can't remember now whether there was some additional information or not. But

obviously, working for the Dairy Council, the carbonated soft drinks were a competition beverage for us, and I assumed that everyone knew what milk was and what the ingredients were, and how healthful a beverage it was; but the people had really no idea that the cola beverages contained caffeine. My experience in working with mothers was that they wouldn't think of giving their children coffee, because it contained caffeine; but giving them a cola, a cool, refreshing drink, was perfectly all right because it was a safe beverage. To the best of my knowledge, I felt that women did not know that the cola beverages contained caffeine, and I felt very strongly that the list of ingredients ought to be on that container of soft drink. So I wrote my comments to this Federal Register proposal, and a very interesting thing happened: it got published in the Food Chemical News, and it had gone down through telling about the comments that came in. You know, I had really no idea that the comments I would make would be public information; I thought they were only going to the agency. But, lo and behold, here were my comments, published in the Food Chemical News.

FL: That is a trade publication for the food trade from Washington, D. C.?

LM: Yes. At the same time that they sent me a copy of the publication with my comments in it, they sent a subscription blank; they were trying to encourage me to purchase a subscription to Food Chemical News. It was too expensive for me and I couldn't see any need for subscribing, but that was my first real introduction into the whole Federal Register process and getting comments in on issues that the agency was involved with.

#### MEYER 4

During this period of time, I got to know Mrs. French a little bit better, and at one point she called me and said that the agency was going to go full-time with their Consumer Consultant Program, and she just was not interested in working full-time. She had a husband and didn't feel that she was qualified to do it. However, I think she would have been, even though she had not been to college. Certainly the leadership experience that she had had with Cooperative Extension over an extended period made her, I think, a well qualified consumer person and consumer advocate.

But at the time she asked me if I knew anyone for the position, I said no, I really didn't. But in the back of my mind, I said to myself, "Lois, that just might be an interesting position." So I salted that away, and during a Dairy Council board meeting in April, there was some discussion between the board and myself that they wanted the program to go in a different direction. My feeling was that that was a commercialization of the Dairy Council Nutrition Education Program, and I wanted to try to maintain a very professional program. So it was agreed to part ways.

I almost immediately then contacted the Food and Drug Administration and made application for their position as full-time consumer consultant. So that was my early introduction to the Food and Drug Administration and the whole process of involving consumers in the commenting on their decision-making process. At that time there was no exam required for the position of consumer consultant. I believe it was referred to as an "unassembled exam," in that they rated and evaluated your application. I had met Michael Tuzzo, the administrative officer, at a community function. We both had exhibits for a public meeting of some kind; I think it was down at the YWCA. And it was



Mike Tuzzo that I talked with when I called and asked for information relative to the position. I was scheduled to come in for my interview.

At that point, Buffalo District had been in their present building some seven, eight months. It was a relatively new building. They were getting ready for their dedication, and Mr. Retzlaff, we sat in his office and chatted. He was really more concerned about inviting community members to the dedication of the building than all the particulars relative to my qualifications for this job, although I suppose in the discussion relative to who I knew in terms of the professional and community people, it gave him an idea of the people that I knew and would have to work with being consumer consultant for FDA.

So when we had discussed the forthcoming dedication and people to be invited, he indicated to me that there were several applicants for the position, and one of them had gone through the political route; that is, she had had the county sheriff, who was active in the Republican Party, contact Mr. Retzlaff on her behalf. My remembrance is that he was very upset with the use of politics in anything to do with the agency, that the agency was not a political creature. Politics had no effect on the agency. So he just wasn't about to hire someone who had strong political ties.

Mike Tuzzo came back into Mr. Retzlaff's office and said, "Did you cover this and did you cover that?" Of course, Mr. Retzlaff hadn't. He said, "I thought you were going to do all of that. We've been talking about the important thing, getting ready for this dedication." So my interview concluded, I guess. I did get all of the essential information that's required to be given to a potential future government employee. But I did get an invitation to attend the

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dedication, and I know that the other applicants also had invitations to attend. At that dedication, Mr. Larrick was there.

FL: He was Commissioner at that time?

LM: He was Commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration at that time. And Mr. Rayfield was there, and he had supervision over all of the field operations, as I remember. It was held in the basement of the building here. The building was built on property that had belonged to the Temple Beth Zion Synagogue, and there had been a fire. So this building really was being changed from religious use to government use. I can remember that emphasis part of the dedication of the building. Then there was a luncheon at the hotel up the street, and there were maybe fifty people that attended that luncheon, including the people who had applied for this position as consumer consultant. I think in a way Mr. Retzlaff was still interviewing in that he was observing the behavior, etc., of the applicants. It was very shortly after the dedication that I got the word from Mr. Retzlaff and Michael Tuzzo that I had been accepted for the position. We set June 8 as my start date.

FL: At that time, Mr. Retzlaff was the District Director.

LM: Yes. Because Buffalo had been in the old scheme of things a station, and he was the station chief, the staff referred to him as "Chief."

FL: And still do.

LM: Yes (laughter). When I came on board in my position, there was an outline of the job description, but it was really very general. Mr. Retzlaff indicated they really didn't know what to do with a consumer consultant. So I sat down and said, "Okay, based on the job description, these are the kinds of things that I need to do for the agency: work with consumer groups, work with professional leaders, get the information about the agency to the educators and to the leaders in the state." At that time, the geographical area that Buffalo District covered was the upstate New York counties from Albany north and west, and we also had the western part of Pennsylvania, so that Pittsburgh, and Allegheny County, and that whole western part of the state was all part of Buffalo District. So I had really two states to function in and community leaders to get to know.

I then said, "In order to be able to do this, I'm going to have to have the following background about the agency, and I'm going to need to go on these kinds of inspections. I'm going to have to have experience up in the lab. I'm going to have to sit with our Food and Drug officers and just get as much knowledge of the agency as possible, so that I can then go out and do the consumer program." So working with one of the supervisors in our Investigations Branch . . . At that time the director of the Investigations Branch--now this is where I'm going to have a problem with some names. Bill Prillmayer was the chief investigator. One of his supervisors--I can see him, but I can't remember his name.

(Interruption in tape.)

The investigation supervisor that I worked with was John Gilmore in developing a training plan. It was an interesting experience because at that time there had not been any female investigators; they were all male investigators. So the thought of having a female travel on the road with the male investigators--this was in 1964--was an uncomfortable situation for some of them. I think some of them were concerned about what their wives would say if they knew that they were traveling with an unmarried female.

My first road trip and training experience was with two of our investigators, our resident in Rochester, New York, Ed Ballitch, and Ray Stutzman. Our original assignment was to do an investigation at Bristol-Myers in Syracuse. All of a sudden there came a change in our plans. A veterinary drug had to be recalled, so our plans for the trip were changed, and we were rerouted.

We worked on this recall of a veterinary drug in Norwich, New York, but I don't know that the name of the company is important. They brought their own portable copier so that we could copy records, and I can remember checking in at the little inn at the town. They had three rooms, two on the second floor and one on the third floor. I said, "I'll take the one on the third floor," because I wanted to do everything possible to make the male investigators comfortable with traveling with a female. So that, I think, started out on the right foot, because I knew they were going to come back and tell all their other investigators what kind of a trip they had had with me. I realized the significance of going out on that trip, because I would be dependent on the cooperation of all of the male investigators to get the training that I knew

would be needed for me to do the job for the agency. So I did everything that I could think of that was "proper," in terms of making this trip.

But I soon learned that, when you're working on a recall, as has been experienced over the years, when they happen they may change every other plan that's been established by an investigator, and that when you're working on this, you may work very long hours, that it's not a nine-to-five kind of thing. Indeed, we examined records and worked very late to get all of the documentation that we needed for this recall.

Then we did end up in Syracuse, making our inspection at Bristol-Myers. Again, when we stopped at the front desk and showed our credentials and said that we were there for an inspection--it was really a label review kind of inspection--the person that we were to see was very surprised that Mr. Stutzman had a female with him. This reaction would be repeated many different times during the period of time that I went out on the various investigations. So I think the first road trip went well and set a good stage for the rest of my training.

I had a variety of kinds of experiences. I know one of them that I was in particular wanting to have was at Gerber in Rochester to see the production of baby food, because there were a lot of complaints about baby food. It was packed in glass, and there were complaints about glass in baby food, as there still are. At that point, the industry had just initiated the new pop tops on their jars because of the problem they had had with women taking the tops off and tasting the baby food and then putting the tops back on again, and then the product going moldy on the store shelves. So I was really very interested in that group of products, because I knew that this was an area of high consumer

interest and concern. So Ed Ballitch took me on an inspection there in Rochester, and I saw how they made the infant cereal, and I saw how they packed in glass, and had a good introduction to that whole line of infant type of foods.

While I was in Rochester we also made an inspection of a cosmetic plant, and that was my first experience with the Gurley Balance, because at that time, we were doing a lot of work on low weights, and I can remember a dusting powder. Every once in a while, Ed would take a product off of the filling line and weigh it, and they were coming off short-weight. So I know that that . . .

(Interruption in tape.)

LM: I can't remember specifically what was in the inspection report now, but I do know our concern was the short weight of this dusting powder. Some of the other inspections that I went on. One in particular that I thought was interesting was going with John Feldman, who was our microbiologist here in Buffalo District, and with Irv Weitzman, who was a food technologist. We went on a series of food inspections, taking microbiological samples. So that gave me a good introduction to the technique that is used for collecting sterile samples for microbiological examination. Both of those people were well-trained people, which was evident to me in watching how they conducted their experiment. I just was kind of the fly on the wall, watching while they did their inspection, although they were perfectly open to my asking questions as to why they did certain things. I found them both to be excellent teachers. Perhaps that's evident by the positions both of them hold today, because John Feldman is District Director in Minneapolis and Irv Weitzman is head of one of the units in the Division of Emergency and Epidemiology. It's been interesting to see some of these inspectors that I worked with very early on, how their career has progressed and the kinds of positions they've moved into.

The first speech that I gave for the agency was to a senior citizen group in Lockport, New York, and it was on health quackery. Mr. Retzlaff gave me background material that the agency had. And of course we had some publications at that time, but not an abundance of materials; but we did have publications that we could use to distribute. One of them was entitled "Your Money or Your Life," and it was a little booklet that described some of the

pieces of equipment that the agency had taken action against over a period of time. Some of those pieces of equipment the district had; and some of the small ones I took to show to the senior citizens. Mr. Retzlaff referred to these exhibits as the "snakes," and that whenever you gave a presentation--and he had done a lot of speaking for the agency--you had to have "snakes." Even today I kind of think of the visuals that I will take for presentations as my "snakes" (laughter).

The Consumer Consultant Program was headed up in Washington by a woman by the name of Carla Williams, and during this period of time of April 1964 and September of '64, each district--and at that time, I believe, there were sixteen districts--hired a full-time consumer consultant, or consumer specialist, as we were called. Carla Williams was concerned that we all had a training program for the consumer specialist to introduce us to some of the agency people and to provide us with the kind of training that she thought we would need in order to function as consumer specialists for the agency. The training was established for the last two full weeks in October.

FL: Was that in 1964?

LM: In 1964.

FL: What date did you actually report?

LM: I reported June 8.



FL: So you had been four or five months on the job?

LM: Right. Getting this background. And I had some time up in the lab. At that point, the district had been taking groups through on tours. I think some of that generated from the fact that it was a new building and the whole idea of having a consumer consultant--Mrs. French--and so organizations did come through on tours. We had Girl Scout troops, and we had others that came through. I can remember working with the director of the laboratory, Felix Sabatino, and with Bill Prillmayer, the director of investigations, in setting up a tour that would be most beneficial for the groups that came in. We modified our tours slightly between adults and children. So during this period of time that was training . . . Although training never stops. Training is an absolute, ongoing kind of program to keep up.

We modified and refined our tour through the building, and part of that came about because of the training that I was getting in terms of what they were doing up in the lab, what kind of analysis they were doing up in the lab. And one of the things that I was very cognizant of was the agency's use of terminology that was strictly agency terminology, that it didn't mean anything to consumers.

FL: Jargon (laughter).

LM: The jargon of the agency. I was very cognizant of the fact that I would have to try to translate these jargon words to words or phrases that the consumer would understand. Unfortunately, in the twenty-three years that I've

been with the agency, I think I have fallen into the trap of using agency jargon; people will tell me that I sound very bureaucratic. So I've forgotten my roots, to some extent, in the fact that I kind of made a promise or tried to make a commitment that I would not use agency jargon but would use terminology that the public would be able to understand.

But when we were sent to Washington for our training session, they put us up at the Congressional Hotel, which is just on C Street and South Jersey, I think. It was right opposite the House Office Building and just up the hill from our building, F.O.B. 8, at 200 C Street. I think Carla was there to greet some of the early ones, although I got in late. What they had done to cut down on expenses was to pair sixteen of us with roommates and people for the most part that we didn't know, although Marguerite Robinson out of Chicago knew our consumer specialist in Los Angeles. No, she was in San Francisco. Mrs. Woods. They had both worked together in the Chicago area for a trade association. So the two of them shared a room together, because I think they were the only two that knew each other.

At first they were going to pair me with Mrs. Lorena Myers, so we would have as roommates Mrs. Lorena Myers and Miss Lois Meyer. Then apparently Carla thought better of that and instead she paired me with Blanche Erkel, the consumer specialist from Minneapolis. When I arrived, Blanche had checked in but she was not in the room. So I settled myself in and after I had been there for a period of time, Blanche blew in. I guess that would be the best way to describe her, because over the years we've referred to her as "Mighty Mouse" and a few other terms, all terms of endearment, because we all thoroughly loved Blanche Erkel. But she was a ball of fire and moved very quickly. I think

she had been in the room only about five minutes when zip--off came the wig! That was my introduction to Blanche Erkel, and we were roommates for all of our consumer affairs conferences for the whole period of time that we were both working for the agency. When Blanche retired, that broke up a roommate combination that had lasted well onto twenty years.

It was an interesting place to be because it was so close to the Capitol, but it was also very convenient to F.O.B. 8. Almost all of the training sessions took place down in the conference room of F.O.B. 8. As we had an opportunity to get to know each other and to share our experiences, I would say that probably I was the only one that had had the opportunity of doing a full range of inspections with the investigators to get to know the agency. Some of the consumer specialists had not been out on any kind of an investigation. Their orientation to their own district really was quite limited, and I guess that that came from the difference in the philosophy of the district directors, how they perceived the job to be, and their appreciation for the hands-on experience. In my discussing the job with Mr. Retzlaff, I said, "If I'm going to talk about the agency, if I'm going to promote the agency, if I'm going to let consumers know what kind of protection the agency provides, I'm going to need to know these certain things." Even though I had laid out my training program, he made other suggestions and things, so I think the training that I got was probably more complete than any of the other consumer consultants. Some of them had been out. I'm not trying to imply that some of them had not had some experience, but I think that mine was probably more comprehensive than what any of the others had.

FL: Do you think that some of that might have been due to a lack of interest on the part of some of the directors in this new program?

LM: Partially, and partially because--maybe not totally not have any interest, but really not knowing what to do, what a consumer affairs person would do. After all, most of the part-time people that worked for the various districts were college professors, as I remember. They taught at schools of home economics, and taught nutrition, taught foods, taught consumer economics, although at that point, consumer economics was not really a defined course the way it is now. But Betsy Streisauer in New York taught at Hunter College, I believe it was. Mrs. Miller in Cincinnati was up in Columbus and taught at that university

FL: Ohio State.

LM: Ohio State. So a good many of the part-time people were college faculty and did this on a part-time basis, which their colleges would allow them to do. Because of their orientation, I think, they didn't need a lot of additional support from the various district directors. They were accustomed to teaching classes, so they could go out and give a speech with the materials that had been provided by Carla Williams. Wallace Janssen at that time was director of Public Information, and he had written many of the publications that we were using. And, of course, the amount of time that they worked, which was only twenty hours a month, as I remember, was not a lot of time. All of a sudden, the district directors had a full-time employee doing consumer work.

The Food and Drug Administration really was the first agency that was involved with consumer education, and so I think that some of the district directors really were not prepared for that. Even though Carla Williams had the responsibility for working with the consumer specialists, doing our training program, coordinating our program, and having the feedback between the district consumer specialists and the headquarters, I really don't think that the district directors were ever brought together and told, "This is what you will do with your consumer people." I don't know for a fact that they didn't, but my impression would be that that part of having consumer affairs people was not done through the district directors. You were a district director.

FL: You're confirming my own impressions that there was not very much direction given to the program from the top--formal, legal actions of the business--and I suppose that is rather natural that not only the leaders but some of us out in the management positions in the field, too, were so geared to that that this was a very different kind of approach.

(Interruption in tape.)

FL: Lois, at that first training meeting at headquarters, who else did you meet of the management staff besides Carla?

LM: At that time, the Commissioner was Commissioner Larrick. I think that there had been some kind of reorganization of the agency, because there was a Bureau of Education and Voluntary Compliance, and the deputy director of that

bureau was a Mr. Shelby Grey. Within that bureau we had the Division of Consumer Education, which was headed up by James Trawick. There was a Consumer Information Branch, and the chief of that branch was Mary Cunningham. It was within that branch that they wrote the publications that we used. There was also a Consumer Survey Branch, and it's my remembrance that there were some contracts out to do surveys and research. It was within that Consumer Survey Branch that they did the research.

Then there was a Consumer Consultant Branch, headed up by Carla Williams. But my remembrance is that Carla apparently had worked directly for Commissioner Larrick and had a close working relationship with Commissioner Larrick. But this new organization put Carla in this Bureau of Education and Voluntary Compliance, and it's my remembrance and impression that she was uncomfortable being in this Bureau of Education and Voluntary Compliance because she was accustomed to reporting directly to Commissioner Larrick and having that one-on-one relationship with him. However, the first day of our training conference, we had a welcome by Commissioner Larrick. First Carla opened the meeting, and then we all met Commissioner Larrick. I think that has set the stage for the consumer affairs people in that generally at every one of our succeeding meetings, the Commissioner has met with us; and over the succeeding years we have met with every Commissioner except one, and that was Commissioner Schmidt. He never came to one of our meetings during the period of time that he was Commissioner.

But I think Carla's early relationship with Commissioner Larrick and being one on one with him kind of set the precedent for the mode in which the consumer affairs people have since functioned within the agency and worked

within the agency. Carla spent a great deal of time in establishing this training program and having us meet all of the agency's top people, because we met with James Cardwell, who was Associate Commissioner for Administration; we met with Mr. Harold O'Keefe, who was Advisory Opinions Branch. Mr. Jonas Bassen at that time was Industry Information Branch. It also included hearing from Mr. Rayfield, who was director of the Bureau of Regulatory Compliance, and Fred Garfield, who was director of the Division of Field Operations. We also met with the Assistant Commissioner for Science Resources, Dr. Kline.

We met with the director of the Bureau of Scientific Research, which also included a tour of the South Agricultural laboratories. At that time some of the animal testing was done in South Agriculture, not in the F.O.B. 8 building, and I can remember going down to that South Agriculture Building and seeing in some of the basement corridors the animal cages. Another person that we met in that tour of South Agriculture was a discussion of animal testing and science work by Dr. Daniel Banes. I can kind of remember the impression that the animals gave me. Being in the basement in South Agriculture really wasn't a very appropriate place for animal testing. It just didn't seem to me to be a very proper place. But I can remember being very impressed with Dr. Banes and his discussion of the kind of scientific work that the agency was doing and would be exploring.

Someone else that came and met with us was Dr. Kenneth Milstead, who was Special Assistant to the Commissioner, and Mr. [Robert] Roe, who was director of the Bureau of Scientific Standards and Evaluations. We also had a tour of the laboratory facility at Beltsville [Maryland], our doghouse, so to speak, where they were doing research on dogs. I think they had some pigs and some

larger animals. But that particular day, Carla had arranged for a bus, and our first stop was the Beltsville animal laboratories. Then we met with some USDA people. So we had a full day away from the Washington, D. C. area.

One of the other people that met with us was Mrs. Esther Peterson, and she was Special Assistant to the President for Consumer Affairs. She came and met with us. It was at a subsequent meeting that we met with her in her office in the executive . . .



(Interruption in tape.)

LM: Mrs. Peterson had already held two regional conferences, and Diane Plaice in Detroit and Mrs. Emily Blinkley in Atlanta had worked with Mrs. Peterson's staff to conduct these regional conferences. Unfortunately, since I wasn't involved with the conferences--I remember that we discussed them--but I can't remember what the main purposes of the conferences were. But the agenda for the conference was probably Mrs. Peterson's agenda, as Special Assistant to the President for Consumer Affairs, rather than an FDA agenda. I seem to remember that they tried to gather in a large number of consumers. It was a several-hours conference, and they had box lunches or something like that. I can remember that our FDA consumer people had some involvement with the mechanics of holding it and the inviting of consumers to attend. They would have been people they had had some contact with or that FDA had worked with in terms of consumer organizations. So those regional conferences were discussed. I think Mrs. Peterson was projecting holding some more, and more may have been held in larger cities like Dallas. But none were ever held in Buffalo or Pittsburgh at that time.

I can remember that Mr. Janssen came and met with us, and he gave us his "blue-plate special." It was a typical speech that he would give about the agency, and it was supposed to be kind of like a model of what we could do to go out and talk about the agency. We just all sat there kind of spellbound by his presentation. He's a very good storyteller, and it had a lot of humor in it--not the "ha ha" kind of humor, but the kind of humor that brings a smile to your face. I think too, as I remember, he had a bag of "snakes," that is, some

examples or illustrations of the kinds of things the agency was involved with in protecting the public. Of course, Mr. Retzlaff had already introduced me to having exhibits of "snakes" as visuals for giving speeches.

Not only was Carla concerned about our getting a good, in-depth background about the agency in meeting the agency leaders, but she was concerned that we would have the skills to do our job, and she had a speech professor from the University of Maryland come in and give us some platform pointers in terms of the art of public speaking. So I think she attempted to provide us with a good mix of information relative to both the agency and how we were to do our job.

One of the last discussions was a luncheon meeting at the end of the two weeks, in which Mr. Trawick was there, and Carla. It's my remembrance that they had held meetings for the part-time people, and so this was our first meeting for the people who had come on board full time. Of course there were a few people who had transferred over from the part-time to the full-time program, including Lorena Myers from Kansas City, Leona Allman from Dallas, and Loretta Johnson from St. Louis. They'd all been part-timers and then converted over to full time.

They asked us when we wanted to have our yearly meetings, fall or spring? I raised the question, what was going to be the purpose of our meetings, of getting together? If it was for planning programs for the following year, then it ought to be held in the spring or very early summer, because the program year started in September. If the purpose of the meeting was going to be for reporting what we had done the previous year, then we could do that in the fall, in October, like this particular meeting. So I said, "It depends on what the

function of the meeting is going to be." And I can remember that there was a very strange look that came across Carla's face, because I don't think that they had really given it any thought. It was just a meeting to get people together, but there was no concept of, would it be a planning meeting in which we would get the ideas, the concepts, and maybe the new materials that we would use for the following program year, or whether it would just be a reporting kind of meeting? So even though Carla had been working with the program, I don't think even at her level that much thought had been given to just how they were going to manage all of these consumer affairs people who were out there in the districts working full time. But my remembrance of that training session was that it was a good one, that they'd provided us with a lot of good, in-depth training.

FL: I assume that each one of these persons that spoke to you talked about what his particular unit was doing, so that overall you got a pretty fair background in what the headquarters does.

LM: Yes, we did. Each one of the people described the operation of his office and to a certain extent I think they tried to apply it to what we would be doing. For instance, when they were talking about the Federal Register process in getting consumer comments, my remembrance is that they talked about how we could encourage consumers to make those comments back on the Federal Register's proposal. I don't remember that Mr. Goodrich, who was counsel for the agency, met with us. I don't think that he met with us. But Mr. Harold

O'Keefe talked about Advisory Opinions Branch. I think that was the advisory opinions that they gave to industry. Industry education.

FL: Did Rayfield or Milstead talk at all about the regulatory thrust of the agency, what our priorities were for that year or anything?

LM: They did talk about our regulatory activities, but I can't remember what our specific thrusts were. One of the things that Dr. Milstead talked about was the National Advisory Committee, and at that point my remembrance is that there was one National Advisory Committee, made up of a wide variety of people--some of them drug oriented, some of them food oriented. Many of them were university based. This was before we had all of our separate advisory committees for the various bureaus and for very specific things. But my remembrance is at that time there was one general, overall National Advisory Committee.

FL: Advisory to the Commissioner?

LM: Yes. That may have been an outgrowth of the advisory committee report that went to the secretary. I believe that's the report of 1962, which said to the agency, "You should be doing more industry education, and you should be doing more public education." And it was the outgrowth of that advisory committee report to the secretary that the agency began its implementation of having full-time consumer specialists in each one of the districts. I think that's why the agency had at that time the Bureau of Education and Voluntary

Compliance. I think that was the implementing part of that 1962 advisory committee.

FL: That was the Second Citizens Committee Report?

LM: Yes. So I think that the mix of programs that Carla put together provided us with the basics of the agency and our regulatory thrusts, and then the work that was being done in this Bureau of Education and Voluntary Compliance in terms of the development of materials. We heard from Judy Bublich, who was producing radio spots and other materials for television, along with the development of the educational materials that Mary Cunningham was involved with. Then, of course, the outside people. Our relationship with USDA and cooperative extension; that came on our trip to Beltsville, when we went to the animal laboratory.

It's my remembrance that it was a very full two-week training period. There were certain kinds of reports that we had to give to Carla Williams. Every time we gave a speech, we had to provide her with a report telling her who the group was, how many attended, what the thrust of the program was; and we had to provide her with a separate list of the questions that were asked. It was my understanding that they reviewed these questions that consumers asked to try to get a handle on the concerns that consumers had for the agency's responsibility in terms of consumer protection.

FL: You wouldn't call this, say, a scientific sampling or anything like that, but just a collection of what people were telling you.

LM: Yes, right. Some feedback. And I think that started the two-way flow of information, that is, what we were telling the consumer about consumer protection and what they had to do to protect themselves, like "Read the Label." I think our basic publication that we used at that time was "Read the Label," and it had pictures in it. I remember the language that was used was not very technical; it was very consumer oriented, so that we had a two-way flow of some of the consumer concerns back to Carla Williams, and then what we were saying to the consumer relative to the agency.

FL: Wasn't that really one of the original ideas behind establishing the program even in the part-time days?

LM: Yes.

FL: Not only would it be a means of publicizing what we were doing, but also for finding out about consumer concerns so that we could consider them in our planning.

LM: Yes, that was the concept. And that was an area that was set up as a regular procedure for the kind of reporting of the work that we did.

FL: How effective was it? What use did they make of the information in the headquarters, do you know?

LM: I don't really know for sure what they did with that information. It may be that they used it partially for developing new materials. If we were getting a lot of questions in a subject area for which we had no written publications—I think that was one of the things that they used it for was to give them guidance on the kinds of written publications that we would need. My remembrance of that time is that I worked with the Cooperative Extension in New York state, the land-grant colleges. I worked with the professional organizations. I did a lot of radio talk shows. I did some television work. We didn't seem to have a budget problem. If I needed to travel to Pittsburgh to do programs in the Pittsburgh area, there wasn't any problem about having money. We weren't restricted in terms of our travel.

I can remember some of the organizations and some of the working relationships that I established. For instance, particularly with Cornell, because we did not have an individual secretary for the consumer specialist. At that time in our district, the secretaries were in a pool under the direction of the chief clerk, and my work went into the pool, along with the inspectors' reports and everything else that had to be done. The chief clerk then would assign it to a secretary to do. I had films to send out; I had publications. If we had requests for publications, the secretaries would have to fill the requests for the publications. But I did not have a single person at that point who did all of my work. We did progress to that point, where the chief clerk assigned one person to do my work, along with other things, but to try to make it easier for the clerks. Because then they would be familiar with my work, familiar with the names and everything.

So we didn't have a lot of backup secretarial support, and I wanted to try to establish some lines of communication, particularly with the state Cooperative Extension, because by sending material to the land-grant colleges and getting their approval of the information, they could then send it to each county extension person, because I was very cognizant of the fact that here I had a lot of counties, a lot of geographical area to serve, but I was the only FDA consumer affairs person. So I would need to utilize the networks within the state to distribute the material. I was sending at that time radio spot announcements to Cornell, and then they would distribute them to the counties; they got copies of the publications. If there was a Federal Register that we wanted comments on, I would send that down to Cornell. So I established a working relationship with the extension people at Cornell here in New York state, which has worked through the years. But there was a need to work through other organizations, because we didn't have a lot of secretarial support, which is even true today.

FL: You get the multiplier effect, then.

LM: Yes. But that was one of the things that was part of the program, was to get this multiplier effect, to work with the leaders who then could take the message back to their organization and their individual groups.

FL: Did you have any comparable network or did you establish one for educational materials for schools, for example? Or did that come later?



LM: No. There was a series of educational packets that was developed by Mary Cunningham and her group. Yes, I did work with the education leaders in Albany, particularly with the home economics education people. And, as a matter of fact, I took all of our materials over to Albany and met with the director of the Bureau of Home Economics Education. She had her staff review the materials and indicate which parts of the home economics curriculum our materials would fit into. Then they, again, had a newsletter that went out to all home economics teachers. And so they told the home economics teachers, "There are these FDA materials, and they fit in with this part of your curriculum."

In addition to the Bureau of Home Economics Education, I worked with the Bureau of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation. Their general emphasis was on physical education. Initially, there was not a very strong health education component. That health education component came probably in 1967, but not initially, so that there was a change in the thrust of education through some things that happened both in our state legislature and in our state education department.

Why don't I open a door and get us a little air?

(Interruption in tape.)

FL: In addition to working through multiplier organizations as you've been describing, what direct contact with consumers did you have during those early years?

LM: Well, I had contact in a number of different ways. For instance, at that time we used to do a lot of radio work and a lot of radio talk shows and call-in shows, so that you were answering a lot of consumer questions. However, very early on—I know the very first speech that I gave on quackery to senior citizens was a speech that I had to write out, and Mr. Retzlaff reviewed it and cleared it. Other speeches that I gave, I would either write out totally or I would do an outline and then Ray Sweeney, who was our Chief Compliance Officer, would review it for me. There was always a concern that what I would say would be correct, and of course questions would come up, and if I didn't understand the question or understand what the answer ought to be, I would go and talk with Ray Sweeney or with Merv Shumate, who was our second Food and Drug officer. But both of them were very patient and would explain the act to me and explain what the agency could do and couldn't do.

There were times when I might write something for an organization's newsletter, and that always had to be cleared. Generally, it was Ray Sweeney who read that material and cleared it before it was sent out. I know that we were encouraged to use the publications that were developed by headquarters, and to use that always as the basis for the information that we disseminated to the public. Through organizational contacts I would let the organizations know that I was available to give speeches, so I gave speeches to extension groups, to Federation of Business clubs. I did some Kiwanis, although at that point I think some of the service organizations were more interested in having one of the men from the district speak, because they were interested in what the investigators did or what the district director would do.

I know Mr. Retzlaff was on an advisory committee at Cornell, and he would come back from those advisory meetings--I think they were food science advisory meetings--and tell us what had transpired at that meeting. We had staff meetings, and he always included me along with the chief investigator and the chief chemist. Mr. Retzlaff generally had all of the supervisors in, so I was considered part of the management staff in terms of attending those staff meetings and being a part of the district management staff. So I had a lot of direct contact . . .

(Interruption in tape.)

LM: So we had a lot of direct contact with consumers as well as with the leaders to get that multiplier effect. In 1966 I think we had a very unique experience in that Carla Williams took, I believe it was, a six-month leave of absence for personal reasons, and her deputy filled in for her. We had an opportunity of going to headquarters for a detail. There were a series of us that went to Washington for a detail, and some of us stayed at the Congressional Hotel in an efficiency apartment, and then each one that came in took over. I had my detail during the month of August of 1966; I think it went through Labor Day or something like that.

It was in 1966 that we were beginning our concern about the drugs of abuse. We were just in the beginning of hiring staff that were going to staff the Bureau of Drug Abuse Control, and we were in the process of pulling together some educational materials for that purpose of drug education. A film was produced by our public affairs people, and the film was previewed at a staff meeting. Mr. Larrick was not there, but . . . Would it have been Mr. Rankin?

FL: Jack Harvey, maybe? John L. Harvey was his deputy, although Rankin was his assistant.

LM: I think Rankin and Kirk kind of chaired this meeting, and we were there for the preview of this film. It was a very compelling film, showing what happens when drugs are abused and the withdrawal process of coming off of the

barbiturates. The film wasn't very long; it may have been twelve to fifteen minutes long, but they had packed into it a tremendous amount of material. After the film was over, there was this long pause; it was just kind of sinking into us what this film had said. And then, all of a sudden, everyone started to applaud. It took that period of time to get the reaction going, but that was the beginning of our work in this whole area of drug abuse.

I can remember we were beginning to work on other educational materials, and this consumer specialist working in Carla's office was developing the plans for implementing the educational program, along with Mary Cunningham and another girl that worked with her, Mrs. Margaret Nicholson. I can remember that at that point, in 1966, the director of the Bureau of Education and Voluntary Compliance was General Fred Delmore, but his deputy, I believe, was Mr. Franklin Clark. I had been there for this month's detail, and even in this period of time—I had lived in Buffalo for six years, but I had never really considered Buffalo home. Frank Clark threatened to keep me working on this project, and I said, "Oh, no. I'm going home." And that was the first time I had ever referred to Buffalo as "home."

It was a unique experience working during that period of time. This Bureau of Education and Voluntary Compliance was situated in one of the temporary buildings on the mall, and we were in Tempo S; so we were not located up in F.O.B. 8, where everybody else was located. It was hot. These buildings were First World War construction that had outlived being really temporary.

FL: They were old frame buildings?

LM: Yes, so they were hot, and I was unaccustomed to the hot August weather in Washington. By then I had been out of the Washington area for a period of years. But I know that the other consumer affairs people who followed me in that detail did work on our implementing the drug education materials. Margaret Nicholson, I can remember, did the development of some transparencies and some other materials that we would have to use for drug education. So this was the first different kind of program that we began working on, rather than our traditional FDA, food-drugs-cosmetics kind of thing. This drugs of abuse was a new topic area.

In New York state, a senator from Long Island wrote a piece of legislation for the state to implement a state education program to implement that piece of drug education legislation. It directed the state education department to develop a curriculum on drug education, and it had written into it that they would use the materials from the Food and Drug Administration, which really gave me a very unique entree into the state education department and being a part of the curriculum that was being developed.

Dr. John Sinacore was the director of the newly formed Bureau of Health Education for the state education department, and they worked all summer on preparing a new health education curriculum, of which drug education would be one of the component parts. To introduce this new curriculum, the state education department had a series of workshops for school administrators across the state. I think there were seven workshops altogether, five of them upstate and two of them downstate. So Mary Gill from New York District had to be involved when it was outside of the area that Buffalo District covered.

But as a part of this team . . . Dr. Sinacore and the deputy director from the Department of Mental Health, the health chairman from the New York State Parent and Teacher organization, the Food and Drug Administration, a health educator from the state health department, were all involved in conducting these workshops for administrators, telling them about the effects of the drugs of abuse, and the new curriculum, and the resources that were available for conducting their educational programs. So we worked as a team and went from location to location conducting these seminars for school administrators and health education teachers. This whole new emphasis and area of concern translated from our having our investigators in drug abuse control and then our drug education materials in working with educators in the state. And I think that it was between our own educational materials that were being developed, plus this state piece of legislation, that gave the agency a good foothold into conducting the drug education program.

At the end of that detail that I had, I had an exit interview with Commissioner Larrick. Each one of the consumer specialists that had come in had an exit interview with Commissioner Larrick. And I think this again emphasizes the relationship that Carla Williams had directly with Commissioner Larrick. Even though we were a part of that Bureau of Education and Voluntary Compliance, there was still a continuing, direct link between Carla and the Commissioner. So I can remember going down to F.O.B. 8 and meeting Mrs. Beulah Sink, who was the Commissioner's secretary, and then having my exit interview with the Commissioner.

I was impressed. I was a young person, and here I was having an exit conversation with the Commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration. I can

remember some of the things that he talked about, and that was the growth of the agency, the increase in personnel that had occurred, and the changes that had taken place in the agency: the building of F.O.B. 8 and how, when it was projected, it would have held all of our people. But in 1966--and the building was only three or four years old at that point--the agency had totally outgrown F.O.B. 8. And he talked about the changes that had taken place, and the size of the agency, and the responsibility of the agency and, as I remember, talked about his one-on-one relationship with Carla Williams as the head of the consumer specialists. So it was, I think, a unique experience for the consumer specialist to have: first of all, that we were such a young part of the agency, and yet there were the opportunities for the details in Washington and then this opportunity for an exit interview with the Commissioner.

FL: Don't you think, maybe, that also reflected his interest in the whole program of consumer affairs?

LM: Yes, I think so.

FL: Because he was the one that really put it into effect. My recollection is that way back, earlier than that, Charles Crawford, when he was Commissioner, had the idea of consumer specialists part-time. But he did not--he was Commissioner for such a short time and then retired, that it really was up to Larrick to implement it and to decide we should take the Citizens Committee advice and start opening up the agency. He was really the driving force on a lot of those things.



LM: I think so, because my remembrance is that there was kind of a half apology that Carla was over in the Bureau of Education and Voluntary Compliance, and not working and reporting directly to him, that this was something that was important to him.

FL: My recollection is that before that, the program was part of the Public Affairs Office, and really was with Janssen. Trawick was Janssen's assistant, and that group reported directly to the Commissioner. They were staffed to the Commissioner.

LM: Yes. But you see, I think, as I remember some of the discussion, it was the implementing of the Second Citizens Report that developed this Bureau of Education and Voluntary Compliance; and this brought Janssen and all of the others that had met directly with the Commissioner down inside of the bureau.

FL: Janssen stayed as an assistant commissioner reporting, but the consumer program moved--and, I think, logically--into this new bureau which was directed for Education and Voluntary Compliance, education of industry, education of consumers, and it was a reasonable thing, probably, to do, particularly if the program was going to increase in staff, which it did.

LM: Yes. It's funny, because it just seemed to me as though Mr. Janssen came and spoke to us during our initial training conference, but somehow I remember

that he was in this Tempo S with us. Now maybe he wasn't; I don't know. Maybe my remembrance is wrong.

FL: We'll have to consult the very long oral history interview that we had with Wallace Janssen.

LM: He would be much more clear on that point. But to go back to your question relative to Commissioner Larrick's interest, I think it was a very strong interest in the consumer specialists program, yes.

(Interruption in tape.)

LM: During this period of time when Dr. Goddard was Commissioner, we did a number of special programs on drug abuse education. I can remember one that we did in Albany in conjunction with the New York State Education Department. We brought in health educators from all across the state to Albany. There was a psychologist that we were able to contract with to come and do the program, and it was all designed to provide information to the health educators that were going to be doing this drug education program in the schools. So there was money and support for doing drug education programs, not only through the curriculum, but the money to, say, bring in experts that could be used as program speakers.

We did it as a statewide program so that Mary Gill in New York and I worked together with the state education department in producing this program. I can remember that Margaret Nicholson from the Consumer Information Branch

came up and gave us headquarters assistance in putting that program together. And so with this kind of a strong introduction to the program and the use of our materials, the education program continued along until the point where the function of drug abuse control was transferred out of FDA and into the Bureau of Narcotics. So then we no longer actively pursued drug abuse education, but we still worked with the state education department relative to general drug education and the concept that drugs can help, but they can harm if they are misused. Of course, you get that with prescription drugs that are not control drugs and also trying to build in a concept that drugs are not magic pills. Drug education has always been a very strong part of the consumer education program.

During this 1967-1968 era, we had the new Child Protection Act and did a lot of education on keeping hazardous substances out of the reach of children. As a matter of fact, in Buffalo District one of the things that I did was an offtake of the slide show that was put together for us, "Keep Out of the Reach of Children," in which we had a series of slides and then a script that we could read. I don't think we had it as an audio tape; I think this was something that we had to read as a script along with the slides that they provided us. But I produced a piece using large print and pictures that was designed to be used with the lower education people, with the departments of social services, and their home economists and their home health aides, in working with the low income people. We received materials from the Laubach Foundation to get the low literacy words and tried to develop materials that could be used by the undereducated population, because we realized that this was a population that, if they didn't care for the storage of these hazardous substances, their children

would be more likely to have accidents with these hazardous substances. So this was a time in which we were concerned about perhaps a population group that we had not attempted to reach before by utilizing materials that were written for the low literacy people.

Also during this period of 1966-1968, we had the passage of the Fair Packaging and Labeling Act. This gave us, again, something different to be talking about. And I think that's one of the reasons why it kind of seems impossible that I've been with the agency for twenty-three years, because there's been this constant influx of new programs to be talking about. We had the drug abuse, then we moved into child protection, and then we moved into the Fair Packaging and Labeling Act, so that there always seemed to be some new emphasis to the program that we would be working with.

FL: Keeps it interesting.

LM: Yes, it has kept it very interesting.

One of the things that I did with this Child Protection Act was a special program with the state education department and the New York State Federation of Home Bureaus. And what we did statewide with this group of homemakers was to develop a program outline on protecting children and making your home safe against hazardous substances. Working with the health educator out of the state education department, we developed a component in which they would take our child protection slides, "Keep Out of the Reach of Children" slides, and using the educational materials that came both from FDA and from the state health department, first asking them to do an educational program in

their chapter, and then asking them to take the information that they used in their chapter and have each member do it for another organization, like the church organization that they belonged to, or their bridge club, whatever, trying to get, again, the multiplier effect to this program.

Then, built in this program was, after they had done some programs outside of their chapter for National Poison Prevention Week, which is the third week in March, they were to do posters and exhibits and try to reach, then, the general public in their community on poison prevention. And some of these chapters even did local television programs. At that time every local station had a locally produced talk show, and so some of these chapters got themselves on television talking about poison prevention. And I know that some of them at that point even wrote letters relative to having safety caps on hazardous products, so this kind of predates the passage of the Product Safety Act, which provided for the safety closures on drugs and hazardous substances.

So the women were, I think, very forward-thinking in terms of their seeing the need for having safety closures on drug products and hazardous substances products. What we had each of the chapters do for a part of this program was to develop a report of what they did, and they submitted their reports, and we had a judging committee of myself, Carmen Mandia from the state health department, and Dr. Virginia Harris, who was associate health commissioner for Maternal and Child Health on the Onandaga County Health Department.

(Interruption in tape.)

LM: Dr. Virginia Harris was Director of the Bureau of Maternal and Child Health for the Onandaga County Health Department, and a prime mover in the Poison Control Center for central New York, and I know had had grants and contracts with the Public Health Service on poison prevention. So she had a very strong interest in poison prevention, and she served as the judge, with myself and Carmen Mandia from the health department. We gave, I guess, first, second, and third awards, and Carmen was able to get the state health department to print up the awards. We may have had several classes; I've kind of forgotten now. We met with the group at their annual meeting in October and awarded these certificates, and the women were delighted with the recognition. We had no money for prizes or anything fancy, but just the recognition, I think, was sufficient at their annual meeting.

As I remember, it was a very successful program; it's one in which we had limited resources between FDA and the state health department, and yet working through this organization, which is a statewide organization with many chapters across the state, we were able to get the message out. We developed a resource packet for each county to have, and then it was shared with the chapters in each county. I purchased a series of extra sets of the slides, "Keep Out of the Reach of Children," which we placed with each one of the regional people, and then they loaned it out to their people to use for their chapter programs. So it was another version of using multiplier groups in order to get our message out, and one, I think, that for the investment that we had to make, we got a lot of benefits from.

FL: About this time that you were talking about was the time that Dr. Goddard came as Commissioner and Ted Cron as his Assistant Commissioner for Education and Information, who had the responsibility for the Consumer Affairs Program. Did that change the direction or the way you conducted the program in the field?

LM: I would say that there were a lot more resources that were supplied to the consumer specialists. We previously had perhaps worked without equipment, and I know they made arrangements for central purchase of slide projectors for us, so that we would have slide projectors to use all of these slide programs that were being developed. They provided us with overhead projectors. Some of the materials were developed on contract, and the materials were designed for school use.

One of the things that we had was a series of programs built around overhead transparencies with some very modern-looking artwork. And there was a series of booklets that could be used in the classroom as study units. Some of the materials were designed for science teachers to use, some for the classroom teacher to use. The science materials were introduced at a national meeting of science teachers that was held in Detroit, and Margaret Nicholson, who was the person who was responsible for the contract, and the developing of these overhead transparencies, and the development of the booklets, asked for assistance from two other consumer affairs people to staff this exhibit for the National Science Teachers meeting. So Diane Plaice from Detroit and, since

Buffalo was closest to Detroit, I went over and helped with the staffing of this exhibit.

This is the first that I remember that the agency had a meeting at a national education meeting. Now there may have been others. We may have had one at the American Home Economics Association. But to the best of my recollection, this was the first time that we had tried to reach out to a professional group of teachers, in this case the science teachers.

I would have to say that the materials got slicker. We had the introduction of the FDA Papers, which took an entirely different thrust from the old enforcement reports that we had, which were all enforcement oriented. This was the first time that they tried to publish a magazine that was directed partly to the industry that we regulated and partly to the public that we were serving. So my remembrance is that things got more plentiful in terms of educational materials, and they were slicker; they were, in some cases, produced on contract by professionals who were accustomed to producing educational aids. There were more of them, and they were slicker.

FL: That magazine, that later became the FDA Consumer, was a source, then, of reprints of some of the articles that could be used in your program in the field.

LM: Right. The reprints, having them in quantity, we were able to use them as handouts for programs, were able to distribute them to teachers to use in the classroom, where we had had FDA consumer memos in the past, which were typed. The district had to arrange for the reproduction of the FDA consumer



memos, because they were not reprinted out of headquarters. We had to do the reprinting, and we made a contract with the GSA printing office in order to reprint those things.

But certainly with the advent of the FDA Papers, and subsequently the FDA Consumer, the quality of the writing and the acceptance of the articles was very high; and even if we didn't have something reprinted as an article, it was something that could be xeroxed and then distributed. So by having the FDA Papers, we began to get a good library, so to speak, of articles. And so when you got a question from a consumer or from a student, you could always go back to the FDA Papers or the FDA Consumer and copy that article to send to the student if they were doing a paper or a class project or something like that.

(Interruption in tape.)

LM: During the FDA reorganization that brought us into the organization called the Consumer Protection and Environmental Health Service, or CPEHS, we had some new programs that joined FDA on the environment--clean water, clean air, noise pollution. So there were a number of changes that took place. The structural changes were that within the CPEHS there were regional directors, and it was so designed that the consumer affairs people were to report to the regional director and his immediate staff.

I was not under the program direction of the local district director. However, they did not change my location. They left me located in the Buffalo District Office, responsible for the same area as Buffalo District had a

regulatory responsibility. But my supervisor was in New York, and I went to New York on a periodic basis for staff meetings and for work with the regional director. The expense accounts came out of the regional office, but I used the automobiles from here, and Buffalo District was reimbursed for a certain percentage of support that they gave me through the teletype, and paper supplies, and things like that. So it in some cases created some dissension among the Food and Drug people who were here in the Buffalo District by having me not directly reportable to the local district director but to the regional administrator.

In terms of the change of program, it meant that we had to undertake programs on clean water and clean air, and work with community development types of people, a group of people we had not worked with before. Because in implementing the clean air and clean water programs, this was done through community development funds that were set aside for water cleanup, for smokestack cleanup.

However, it also brought about working with more advocacy groups, and I know that we worked with some labor unions in terms of air pollution. And there were women's organizations that were very active in the environmental issues. For instance, the League of Women Voters had positions and position papers on the environment; particularly, the League of Women Voters had a very strong position on water pollution and the quality of Lake Erie. And the American Association of University Women also had a very strong interest in the environment. In the process of doing programs for both of these groups, the League of Women Voters and the American Association of University Women, I eventually joined both of the national and local organizations and have remained

a member of these organizations since, because of the impact that these organizations have in terms of the study that they do on an issue and the positions that they then take on an issue.

We did have some problems with credibility, where we were accepted as an FDA person and knowledgeable about FDA issues. When we started dealing with these environmental issues, people realized that the environment had not been our background or our basic expertise, so I would have to say that I, personally--I don't know whether other consumer specialists faced this or not--faced a credibility problem in terms of people accepting me as someone knowledgeable in these environmental issues. And I presume that that's one of the reasons why I wanted to join these organizations that had these environmental issues as an area of interest, so that I could expand my knowledge of the environmental issues and also to get a better perspective on what consumers--the public--were thinking about in terms of these issues. I'm not sure that if we had stayed with the Environmental and Consumer Protection Program for an extended period of time I would have continued to have had that problem of acceptance in terms of having an environmental expertise or not. I don't know.

At that point in time there were a lot of grass-roots organizations that were undertaking environmental issues. For instance, there was a group of women that were concerned about water pollution and the use of phosphates in detergents, and they were lobbying for a change in state law to eliminate the phosphates from the clothes-washing detergents. There was another air pollution group that worked out of the American Lung Association. There was another group here in Buffalo called ECHO, the Environmental Clearing House

Organization, and they had some support from the Junior League. The Junior League was a group that we had never worked with before. They were the elitist kind of young women's organization. But the Junior League had a concern about the environment, and so it was some of their leadership that developed this Environmental Clearing House Organization.

ECHO was a repository for information on environmental issues, and they would sometimes prepare a white paper or a position paper on an issue based on the materials that they had in their library. This library was up at the University of Buffalo; it's a part of the architectural school. So this whole period of being a part of the Consumer Protection and Environmental Health Service brought about both, I would say, some professional growth in terms of new issues, but also personal growth and an introduction to some organizations that I had not worked with before.

FL: Did the government agencies that you were representing--water pollution, air pollution, and so on--did they furnish you with any training or materials that you could use in this work?

LM: Yes, some training. For instance, the people who headed up the Consumer Affairs Program in Washington again brought us into Washington, and we had training programs. They brought in the experts from . . . They had all been units in the Public Health Service that were brought into the organization of this Consumer Protection and Environmental Health Service. So they brought in the experts from each of these agencies that were now part of CPEHS and gave us training on air pollution and water pollution, and of course they had experts

in their headquarters units so that we could call on the experts for either doing programs or getting information. Then that was supplemented by working with the regional staff under the regional administrator, because there were people located in the regional office that had been a part of those organizations when they were just a part of the Public Health Service. So there were experts for us to call on, both at the national level and at the regional level.

FL: But none of them resident here?

LM: No. They all remained in New York, and so the people in this building were strictly the Food and Drug people, except for myself.

FL: It made it a little harder, then, to communicate, to get answers to your questions?

LM: Yes. I found that, while it was interesting and I felt a certain amount of professional and personal growth while we were associated with this program, I also felt some isolation and some frustration, because I was the only one here in this office that was dealing with those programs. So from that standpoint it was a less than satisfactory kind of organizational setup.

I can remember some of the difficulties that we had because we were still doing FDA program as well as the environmental programs. And since people knew us for our FDA programs, you were more likely to go out and do an FDA-type program than an environmental program, because you were a little more comfortable with it. But I know that there was a certain amount of

frustration on the headquarters' part, because the environmental issues are ones that have to have long-range planning and long-range commitment, and FDA's problems are immediate--what are you going to do about a product that needs to be recalled or seized or something. So my remembrance is that it was not a comfortable blend of organizations or program responsibilities.

FL: I think that's probably the understatement of the decade (laughter).

LM: (laughter)

FL: I believe there were very few people at FDA that looked kindly on this organization. For one thing, the philosophy and the operating methodology was so different. Most of the other programs did their thing indirectly, by financing state activities. We did ours with our own employees, and right there you had a built-in kind of conflict, trying to adapt these things and mold them together. It was at best, I guess, an uneasy union.

LM: Yes. But it was during this time that our job description was changed. The consumer specialists were taken out of the Home Economics Series, which had on it a cap of 11.

FL: That's GS-11 pay grade?

LM: Yes. "Government Service," I guess is what the "GS" stands for.

FL: I think so.

LM: Eleven was the top grade that you could get in this Home Economics Series. Most of us, when we were hired, were home economists. Some were registered dietitians; some had had various backgrounds: journalism, foods nutrition. But most of us were home economists, and so it was during this CPEHS period that we were taken out of that Home Economics Series and put over into a general series, and we were all then moved to Grade 12.

FL: Was that the time when the title was changed to Consumer Affairs Officer, or was that at a later date?

LM: No, that was at a later date. We were still consumer specialists, and I think that title fit in with some of the other specialists that were at the regional level, from other titles that were used in the Public Health Service, because in the Injury Prevention and the Child Safety Program, there was a specialist in New York, and his title, I think, was injury prevention specialist. But it was a title that fit with some of the other people who were also on the regional staff for CPEHS. No, the name change did not come until sometime after 1972.

When we were disassociated from CPEHS, the thing that remained behind was this stronger product safety, and at that time the Product Safety Act had been passed. We were involved with some toy safety and the child-proof packaging. We also got the interstate commerce Milk Safety and Food Safety Programs, so there were some parts of that program that were brought into

CPEHS that with the passage of the Environmental Protection Act--when the environmental parts of CPEHS were taken over to the Environmental Protection Agency--it left behind with FDA the milk and the food interstate programs and the product safety part of the program.



(Interruption in tape.)

LM: I think also one of the things that were left behind after CPEHS was the concept of regional directors. We had an FDA regional director, and so we still had some of these regional specialists, like Accident Prevention, Milk, and Safety that remained with the FDA regional director's staff, along with having the individual districts. It wasn't until the advent of CPEHS that the district had been under another administrative layer between the district and the headquarters staff; so that something that was left behind after CPEHS left, this regional set of administrators that was another layer of administration between the district director and the headquarters units.

(Interruption in tape.)

LM: In the changes of organization and the changes in regional boundaries that took place, Buffalo District lost the western part of Pennsylvania and gained some more of the counties in New York state, which brought us up a whole lot closer to the New York City area. But in this process it meant that I no longer traveled regularly to Pittsburgh and worked with the state leaders in Pennsylvania.

During the sixties I had done a number of programs with Mrs. Virginia Knauer, who was the director of Consumer Affairs for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. We did several statewide programs, and in particular cooperated with one in Harrisburg, the capital of Pennsylvania, in which both of the district directors, Curtis Joiner and Irwin Berch, participated in the program.

We felt that we had a very successful program in allegiance working with Mrs. Knauer.

We were embarked on a series of programs that Virginia had undertaken with the Consumer Affairs people that were in the Department of Health and Human Services, and I was going to be involved in a program in Erie and a second program down in Pittsburgh. I flew to Erie to participate in the program. The basic organization and responsibility was being carried out by Virginia's staff in her Consumer Affairs Program, and she had the Consumer Affairs lawyers as a part of her staff, as well as the weights and measures people. But she had a lot of lawyers in regional offices, like resident offices.

That evening, after our program was over in Erie, we learned that during the day Virginia had been down to Washington for an interview, and she was being interviewed to become President Nixon's Special Assistant for Consumer Affairs. It was kind of interesting to be there and to hear her description of how they whisked her from the department over to the executive branch offices for her interview with the White House staff. Of course, at that point she didn't know whether she was going to be accepted for the position or not. However, since she was a Republican and had worked with the statewide program, I had a feeling that she had a very good chance of getting that position. The next day we flew to Pittsburgh and had the program in Pittsburgh on a Saturday. It was an interesting experience to have worked with Virginia at the state level and then have her move on to the White House and be the president's Special Advisor for Consumer Affairs.

We previously had had a lot of contact with Esther Peterson. Esther had done regional programs around the country, although in 1968, during the

election, some of the regional programs that she did were very political in nature; and I know that the consumer specialists in the various districts where Mrs. Peterson held some of her meetings were very concerned about the political nature of the meetings that they were being asked to help with, because the agency really tried to stay away from politics. So the last months of Mrs. Peterson's tenure as White House Special Assistant for Consumer Affairs, our work with her was very uncomfortable. So I think we were looking forward to having someone come into that position who was familiar with doing consumer affairs and consumer protection kinds of work. After the aborted appointment of Willie Mae Rogers from the Good Housekeeping Institute as the President's Special Assistant for Consumer Affairs, which lasted, perhaps, just a couple of days, we, I think, were looking forward to having someone in that position that we could work with and do regional programs with.

(Interruption in tape.)

LM: During President Nixon's tenure in office--and President Ford's tenure, also--Virginia continued as the Special Assistant for Consumer Affairs, and she brought a little bit of different direction to that position than what had been held by Esther Peterson. She did not attempt to do the regional kinds of programs that Esther Peterson had done, but tended to work more through other organizations and had a different kind of agenda for her office. We would see Virginia when we had our Consumer Affairs gatherings, so that there was a continuing contact with her; but we did not work with her on specific programs.

FL: Lois, it's getting late in the day. There's certainly a lot more to the story that you can tell me, I'm sure. What we've done so far has been excellent, and will be very useful. Perhaps this is as good a point as any that we should stop this session. I look forward, then, to doing another session at another time when we both happen to be in the same town. Would this be all right with you?

LM: That would be fine, and it would give me an opportunity of pulling some things together so that we could talk about the chronology of events that happened with the cyclamates and some of our other food additives issues, and I would look forward to another session.

FL: Let's plan to do that, then. Thank you very much.

LM: Thank you.